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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A Century of National Life.

A THANKSGIVING SERMON

BY

HENRY MELVILLE KING, D. D.

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A THANKSGIVING SERMON

—BY—

HENRY MELVILLE KING, D. D.,

DELIVERED AT A

Union Service of Baptist Churches,

HELD IN THE

TABERNACLE BAPTIST CHURCH,

ALBANY, N. Y.,

NOVEMBER 29th, 1888.

PRINTED BY REQUEST.

ALBANY, N. Y.:
RIGGS PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY
1888.

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THANKSGIVING SERMON.

PSALM 100:3–5. "Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

Whether we look at ourselves this morning as members of separate families or churches, or as citizens of this great American Republic, this recognition of our dependence upon God, this ascription of praise to Him for his unceasing goodness, and this summons to grateful worship are equally appropriate.

The year 1776 is called the birth year of this nation, because in that year the remarkable document which declared "that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States," was adopted and proclaimed to the world. But the "confederation" at first entered into, had about it little of the authority, dignity or unity necessary to command the respect of other nations, or even to self-preservation. Congress was not authorized to compel obedience to any law, to raise money by taxation, or to fix the rates of duties on imported goods. Being afraid that the central government would be tyrannical, the States had conferred upon it little power to govern

at all. The weakness and insecurity of such a Union became more and more apparent to thoughtful minds. Washington said: "We are one nation to-day, and thirteen to-morrow; who will treat with us on these terms?"

Ten years after the Declaration of Independence, in September, 1786, a convention called to frame a constitution met at Annapolis. Only five States were represented, and no action was taken. The next year a second convention was called for the same purpose in Philadelphia, and remained in session from May until September. Eleven States (all except New Hampshire and Rhode Island) were represented. Washington, a delegate from Virginia, was the president of the convention. Radical differences in sentiment were disclosed. "The adherents, respectively, of the idea of a strong central government and of State supremacy, were apparently irreconcilably antagonistic." The delegates from New York were Robert Yates, John Lansing, Jr., and Alexander Hamilton—the last, one of the most remarkable men of his day, who wielded a controlling influence in the convention. Yates and Lansing were earnest for the doctrine of State supremacy, and Hamilton as earnestly advocated a strong Federal Government. The first two, finding the sentiment of the convention against them, withdrew. The views of Hamilton prevailed, and after a session of four months a Constitution was framed—the one under which (with some amendments) the Republic has ever since been governed—which unified the thirteen loosely-jointed States into a compact nationality, and may be said to have consummated the birth of the American Republic. It is of this document, then framed, that the most eminent living statesman of England, and of the world, has said: "The American Constitution is, as far as

I can see, the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time, by the brain and purpose of man."

And Sir Henry Maine, a distinguished writer on Political Economy—who cannot be charged with a prejudice in favor of Democracy, but rather the reverse—speaking of our Constitution, makes the following favorable comment: "The powers and disabilities attached to the United States and to the several States by the Federal Constitution, and placed under the protection of the deliberately contrived securities we have described, have determined the whole course of American history. That history began, as all its records abundantly show, in a condition of society produced by war and revolution, which might have condemned the great northern Republic to a fate not unlike that of her disorderly sisters in South America. But the provisions of the Constitution have acted on her like those dams and dykes which strike the eye of the traveller along the Rhine, controlling the course of a mighty river which begins amid mountain torrents, and turning it into one of the most equable waterways in the world."

The work of the convention having been so admirably accomplished, only one thing more was necessary, viz., the ratification of the Constitution by the requisite number of States. The New York convention, called for this purpose, met at Poughkeepsie, June 17, 1788, the body of delegates being nearly equally divided in their sentiments as to the merits of the proposed Constitution. While they were in session, the news came that New Hampshire had ratified the Constitution, which made the requisite number of States, and settled the question. At length, on the 28th of July, after a remarkable speech of three hours by Alexander Hamilton, New York gave its vote in the affirmative—

the vote standing thirty to twenty-seven, a majority of three. This action was in season to enable New York to participate in the first Presidential election, one hundred years ago.

We stand to-day, then, at what may be called the centennial of the Republic, for not until 1788, when the Constitution became the supreme and unifying law of the States, did the nation truly emerge into being, and enter upon its career as a distinct and unique nationality, having in view not only the development of the material resources of this vast continent, but the illustration on this western shore of those principles of popular government and human freedom, toward which all nations and all history and all progress, impelled by the enlightening influences of the Christian religion, had been slowly but surely tending.

We may well pause on this centennial Thanksgiving, and take a view as comprehensive as we can of the marvellous increase and the present magnitude of the nation which God has given to us for an inheritance, and whose destiny He has, to some extent, put in the hands of this generation. The youngest born has already become great among the nations of the earth, and bids fair to outstrip them all. The original thirteen States have become thirty-eight, with several Territories knocking for admission into the equal sisterhood. Our population, by natural increase and immigration, has nearly doubled each twenty years during the last sixty years, and the three millions of a hundred years ago have rounded up into sixty millions to-day.

If we look at the physical basis of empire, what do we find? A territory measuring more than 3,600,000 square

miles; or, if we subtract Alaska, about 3,000,000 square miles.* This area is, according to Ritter, nearly equal to the entire continent of Europe with its dozen kingdoms, great and small. It would make eighteen States as large as Spain, thirty-one as large as Italy, and sixty as large as England and Wales. Should you take five of the six first-class powers of Europe, viz.: England, France, Germany, Austria and Italy, and add Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Denmark and Greece, you could lay three such empires west of the Hudson river without their overlapping each other. New York was once called the Empire State; and although, on account of its five millions of population it still seems to be the pivot on which the national election turns, it cannot long remain such, and in point of area it has long since lost its proud distinction, and dropped into the minority. There are twenty-eight States and Territories that exceed New York in size. California contains more than three times as many square miles, and Texas nearly six times as many. Mr. Gladstone has said that the United States furnish "the natural base for the greatest continuous Empire ever established by man." Its territory spans the continent, and has an ocean front on either side of thousands of miles which put it into commercial relations with all the nations of the earth. And this territory, though so vast, is bound together by bands of iron, and its remotest edges are made contiguous by steam and electricity. California is not so distant from Maine to-day as was New York a hundred years ago. Within twenty-four hours after a national election has taken place, the result is accu-

* In addition to the Census Reports of the United States, I would acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Carnegie's "Triumphant Democracy," and Dr. Josiah Strong's "Our Country," whose statistics and comparisons I have freely used.

rately known from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific slope. The lake system on the north gives us virtually another ocean frontage, and the mighty river courses, unparalleled in any continent, are the providential arteries along which the throbbing, increasing life of the nation may flow without interruption. Counting no stream whose length is less than a hundred miles, our country has forty thousand miles of river flow to seventeen thousand in Europe. A river steamer may make a continuous voyage from the Gulf of Mexico into the heart of the country 3,900 miles, "as far as from New York to Constantinople."

There can be no question but that the seat of empire, in this vast country, is to be in the West, which, a few years ago, was an untravelled wilderness, but is now rapidly opening to our astonished vision. Of twenty-two States and Territories west of the Mississippi, only three are as small as the whole of New England. Montana would stretch from Boston to Cleveland westward, and southward as far as Richmond; Idaho from Toronto to Raleigh; California from Massachusetts to the southern boundary of South Carolina, and Texas has a maximum measurement as great as the distance from New Orleans to Chicago, or from Chicago to Boston, or from Norway to the Mediterranean sea. Texas exceeds, by 62,000 square miles, the whole German empire, by 70,000 France, and by nearly 100,000 Spain.

All along the course of history populations have moved westward; to use the words of De Tocqville, "as if driven by the mighty hand of God." This has been from nation to nation, and from land to land. Within the limits of this new world, equal to many lands in extent—and already the receptacle and arena of all nations—a new illustration

of this historic fact is being furnished. The great West, with its almost unlimited opportunities and its marvellous resources and productiveness, is destined to be occupied by a busy and aggressive people, both native and foreign-born, and in wealth as well as population, to dominate the nation. The silence of ages is disturbed on every hand by the axe of the pioneer; the plow is turning the virgin soil into furrows, along which the golden harvest is marching like an army of conquest; the villages of yesterday are municipalities to-day, and the solitudes of our great West are throbbing with the life of the increasing millions.

The single State of Illinois, it is said, could sustain a population of 20,000,000. The present population of the whole country could live and be comfortably supported within the limits of Texas, and the population not be as dense as in Germany. Indeed, Texas, such are its extent and its fertility, could have produced all our food crops last year, and the world's supply of cotton (12,000,000 bales), and had a cattle ranch left larger than the State of New York. In 1879, this country fed its population of 50,000,000, and exported nearly 300,000,000 bushels of grain, and yet we are told that the crops could have been doubled on the same soil. China has an area less than half that of the United States, and supports a population of 400,000,000.

Our country, it is estimated, is capable from its agriculture of feeding a population of a thousand millions, and from its mining and manufactures of enriching them all.

Our mineral products are of unequaled richness and variety. We already produce one-half the gold and silver of the world's supply. In a single decade (from 1870 to 1880) the yield amounted to $732,000,000.

Our manufactures easily lead the world in amount. In 1880, they exceeded those of Great Britain by $650,000,000, and have been increasing with a rapidity twice as great as hers. In their character and merit, the progress is still more marked. The imitativeness and inventive genius of our countrymen are attracting the attention of other nations. Our government issues, annually, four times as many patents as the English government—20,297 in a single year, 1884.

Our sewing machines, our sleeping cars, and our pianos and organs, are finding a ready market in the old world. The past century has been one of unparalleled progress among all nations, in the arts, in the sciences, in all things that conduce to man's comfort and growth, that widen the bounds of his knowledge, and make him more refined in peace and more terrible in war.

It is but little more than a century since street lamps were introduced in London, since the steam engine was patented by Watt, and since Arkwright began the manufacture of cotton cloth by spindles and looms moved by water-power. It is less than a century since Galvani discovered the science that has given us the wonder-working telegraph. Within the memory of men still vigorous, the first steam vessel crossed the Atlantic, and it is hardly sixty years since Stevenson's "Rocket" started into being the smoking, screaming locomotives, which are winding their serpentine way across all continents, and streaking all skies with their black, but evanescent clouds.

In all this progress our nation has had its share, and with it all it has kept pace. Between the oceans which wash our shores stretch half the railroad tracks in the world. Our expositions at home and our contributions to those

abroad have excited the amazement and admiration of other nations, and have given us rank with all for enterprise and skill, for the ingenuity and variety of our inventions, for the excellence and abundance of our useful manufactures, and for our respectable attainments even in the fine arts. An observing Frenchman visiting this country twelve years ago wrote to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* as follows: "America can feed Europe with corn, wheat, preserved meats and live stock as it has supplied it with cotton; it has clothed Europe, and it can nourish Europe." "America will learn more and more how to get along without Europe, but Europe will not be able to get along without her. It is truly a new England which is rising across the seas, and which already threatens the old England in all her markets. The commercial interests of France are also threatened." "But what is still graver, is the fact that the Americans are getting hold of the processes, the sleight-of-hand of our workmen. Already in the manufacturing of jewelry, watches, bronzes, furniture and artificial flowers they produce an article which bears the real stamp of solidity and good taste." "Switzerland is already in a state of agitation over the success of American watches. In carriage making, cabinet work, glass work and pottery the United States is almost the peer of France and the other great nations. In other things they have got ahead of us; and all this in spite of the high price of labor. It may be said that we are their instructors and masters, as Italy was ours at the Renaissance, and they are destined to surpass us some day as we did the Italians. Venice, Milan and Florence taught us formerly how to melt glass, to weave silk and velvet, and soon we got ahead of them. Will the same thing happen to us in respect to the United States?"

These words of frank confession were written twelve years ago. America has not been sleeping since then. We send our steel to Sheffield, our cotton fabrics to Manchester, our watches in increasing number to Geneva, our agricultural implements to Australia, and our petroleum to India and China. At the late International Electrical Exposition in Paris, five gold medals were issued, all of which came to this country. Mr. Herbert Spencer says: "Beyond question, in respect to mechanical appliances, the Americans are ahead of all nations."

From this brief material survey, what do we learn?

I. That we have in this country the natural basis for the greatest empire in the world. There is no prospect of the consolidation or the expansion of the Empires of the old world. On the other hand, after the failure of the most gigantic attempt at disunion, an attempt which was born of the system of human bondage—a national peril, which, thank God, has been forever removed—there is no prospect of the dismemberment of this Empire. The civil war, instead of splitting the nation asunder, knocked out and destroyed the wedge. The union of States, one and indivisable, was cemented as never before by fraternal blood. The nation came forth from the smoke and carnage of the rebellion, with a new and indestructible consciousness of unity. But one people can occupy this vast domain which we call our country, a people acknowledging one central government, bound together by a common love of freedom and of free institutions, partakers of a common increase and prosperity, and sharers of a common glory.

II. Secondly, we learn that our population is increasing with greater rapidity than that of any other nation. No small per cent of this increase is due to immigration. It

was not until 1840 that the tide began to set in strongly. The facilities for reaching our shores had been previously too meagre and too expensive. More immigrants are received now in any single year, than in the whole decade previous to 1840. From that year to 1880, a little more than nine millions had changed their homes from the old world to the new, fifty-five per cent of whom were British, and thirty-three per cent of them of German extraction. The stream continues with an increasing, rather than a diminished volume. Some years, more than three-quarters of a million of arrivals are registered. The attractions of a free and prosperous land are making themselves felt more and more among the oppressed and restricted millions of the old world, while the expellent forces of other nations continue to exist and operate with little abatement of power. All the social and political agitations of Europe mean increased emigration to America. Already there are more English speaking people in this land than exist in all the world besides; and it is said that "Germans only want one thing—money enough to come to America." This suggests one of the most serious problems which confront us, whether this vast incoming foreign population, of different languages and customs and religions, can be assimilated, Americanized, moulded into a homogeneous people under the influence of our free institutions. If the influx was less rapid, there might be no fear of the capacity of the nation to digest and absorb into itself this foreign element. It is the quantity that excites the uncertainty. If our population increases at the same rate as of late, it will number in eleven short years, at the close of this century, 100,000,000, of whom 20,000,000 will be foreign born. And yet this may be only the beginning; the 20,000,000 only the first instal-

ment, the *avant couriers* of vast populations yet to come to us. The nation is yet in its infancy. Yet, somehow, such is our faith in its infant powers, or rather, perhaps, I should say, such is our confidence in the providence and purpose of Almighty God, that we go on singing:

> "I hear the tread of pioneers of nations yet to be,
> The first low wash of waves where soon shall roll a human sea;
> The rudiments of empire here are plastic yet and warm,
> The chaos of a mighty world is rounding into form."

III. Thirdly, we learn from the merely physical survey of our country that this nation has already come to be the most prosperous and productive nation in the world. In 1880 our agricultural products amounted to the fabulous sum of $2,625,000,000, and our manufactures to the still more fabulous sum of $4,440,000,000. The total wealth of this country in 1850 was estimated at $8,430,000,000, while that of Great Britain amounted to $22,500,000,000. In thirty years this nation had outstripped the mother country in point of wealth, her wealth being swollen to nearly $50,000,000,000, while that of the United Kingdom had advanced to less than $44,000,000,000.

Mr. Carnegie, an Americanized Englishman, says in language which seems wildly enthusiastic: "The Yankee Republican could buy every acre of Great Britain and hold it as a pretty little Isle of Wight to his great continent; and after doing this, he could turn round and pay off the entire national debt of that deeply indebted land, and yet not exhaust his fortune, the product of a single century. What will he not be able to do ere his second century closes? Already the nations which have played great parts in the world's history grow small in comparison. In a hundred years they will be as dwarfs, in two hundred

mere pigmies to this giant; he the Gulliver of nations, they but Liliputians who may try to bind him with their spider threads in vain."

This country is already the cotton producer of the world. If it is not already, it is destined soon to be, with its 1,500,000 square miles of arable land—the granary of the world. And if our mining interests continue to develop, of which there seems no reason for doubt, we shall be the treasury of the world. Moreover, it should be noted that the vast wealth of this nation is not confined to comparatively few hands as in other countries. There are no proprietors of vast landed estates which have descended from father to son, and few millionaires among us. The cry of the alarmists that the rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer is utterly without foundation. There is no nation on the face of the earth in which there are so many land-owners and property-holders in proportion to the population as here.

As the opportunities of fortune are more favorable and numerous in this country than anywhere else, so the wealth of the nation is more equally distributed. Statistics prove that nowhere are the people so well clothed, so well housed, and so well fed as in free America. In Europe the number of bushels of grain annually consumed per head is 17.66; in America, 40.66. In Europe the number of pounds of meat annually consumed per head is 57.50; in America, 120.00. The best fed nations of Europe, viz.: France in the matter of grain and England in the matter of meat, fall below our own country. The opportunities of industry here, and the rewards of industry, the wages of labor, exceed those offered in any other land.

I do not mean to say that there are not suffering and

hardship and poverty among our people, though in too many instances they are the result of improvidence and dissipation; but I do mean to say, that nowhere on earth is comfort so widely diffused, the necessaries of life so readily obtainable by honest effort, and even wealth so easily accessible, as under "the stars and stripes." If there were needed any other argument to prove this, and to prove the general prosperity of our citizens, the fact that the annual savings of our people far exceed those of any other people, and amounted in a single year to $1,050,000,000, would be sufficient.[8]

I have dwelt thus far only upon the material development and prosperity of our country during the century that has passed since the adoption of the Constitution. I need not say that such prosperity, great as it seems, is of an inferior quality; that the true greatness of a nation is not estimated by its bulk or the number of its people, and the highest development is not that which can be reckoned in dollars and cents. If this was all the nation had to show for a century of existence, the record would hardly be worth the writing or the repeating. But it will be seen that there is a higher development and a nobler progress, which not only have contributed in no small degree to this material growth and enlargement, but which constitute our truest national wealth and glory.

Let us see what has been done in the line of general education, and philanthropy, and religion; what progress has been made in the diffusion of intelligence and culture among this growing people; to what noble uses its rapidly accumulating material resources have been consecrated. For, as Mr. Lowell said at the Harvard Anniversary, "Material success is good, but only as the necessary pre-

liminary of better things. The measure of a nation's true success is the amount it has contributed to the thought, the moral energy, the intellectual happiness, the spiritual hope and consolation of mankind."

It is well understood that the wise founders of this Republic saw clearly that popular government must rest upon the intelligence of the people, and so they made immediate provision by general taxation for popular education. The school-house was built into the foundations of the Republic, as a vital part of its existence and essential to its stability. The far-seeing fathers felt as another has said, that, "upon no foundation, but that of popular education, can man erect the structure of an enduring civilization. This is the basis of all stability, and underlies all progress. Without it the State architect builds in vain." And so they took the matter of education, from the first, into their own hands. They did not leave it to the option of the people, and much less did they leave it to the control of the church. Popular government demanded popular education. That to them had all the force of an axiom. The hand that wielded the mighty power of the ballot must be controlled by intelligence. The right of private judgment must be accompanied by the enlightenment of the judgment that possesses the right. Almost before the Pilgrim fathers had completed their log cabins for the shelter of themselves, they had built the school-house, and appointed the school-master for the education of their children. We are told that only six years after the settlement of Boston, four hundred pounds were appropriated for the founding of Harvard College, which was, of course, at first, little more than a common school. "This sum was greater than the entire tax levy of the colony for the year."

A different policy was inaugurated by the aristocratic first settlers of Virginia. Twenty years later (in 1656) Sir William Berkeley, the Governor, wrote: "I thank God there are no free schools or printing, and I hope we shall not have them these hundred years. For learning has brought heresy and disobedience and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them and libels against the best government. God keep us from both."

Just so far as these different policies have prevailed, they have produced different types of civilization. The one is aristocratic, and is hostile to the very idea of popular government. The other is democratic and lies at the foundation of all successful popular government. The free schools of America are not only its glory, but they are its safety, and the money expended for their support is the wisest investment which a free government can make. The number of schools of various grades in the country is estimated at 179,884, and the army of teachers at 273,000. The annual expenditure for school purposes in all the States amounts to more than $90,000,000. New York alone expends $11,000,000 annually upon the education of its children. Great Britain spends only $33,000,000 for education, and at the same time spends $144,000,000 for the support of its army. The nations of Europe spend sevenfold more for the maintenance of their standing armies than for that of their school systems. The idea of the necessity of popular education has grown with the growth of the nation, and the new States of the West are expending more for education per capita than the older States. This important matter is left to individual States and communities. The general Government has assumed no control and taken no action beyond the gift of sections of

public lands, which amount to 78,000,000 acres. In the judgment of wise statesmen, it ought, however, in the interests of self-preservation, to take action looking to the more general diffusion of intelligence in States where culpable indifference or financial inability prevails. There is still an alarming amount of illiteracy in the country, especially among the colored people, and the poor whites of the South, and the foreign-born population. But this is being slowly reduced. It is a remarkable fact that of the native-born population of the North only five per cent are classed as illiterate, and that is owing, undoubtedly, in a majority of instances, to congenital imbecility. The higher schools of learning, academies, colleges, professional schools and universities which carry education beyond the line which State patronage can legitimately reach, are founded and supported by personal or denominational generosity. That such schools exist in every State, and their advantages are offered to all of both sexes at a merely nominal price, speaks loudly for the estimate which is put in this country upon mental culture and professional training. Into these schools have gone uncounted millions of private wealth, and from them have flowed, as from perennial fountains, untold strength and blessing to the life of the nation. Johns Hopkins, Cornell and Vanderbilt Universities, Packer Institute, Vassar, Wellesley, Smith and Bryn Mawr Colleges, and the University of the State of California, which represent a foundation of from one to thirteen millions of dollars, and which bear for the most part the names of their generous founders, are the magnificent fruits of this free soil and this later civilization. They are without a parallel in all the centuries that have preceded us.

I might speak of the 175,000 libraries of the country into which more than 50,000,000 books have been collected, which are exerting an incalculable influence upon the intellectual and moral life of this people, and of the nearly 12,000 newspapers and magazines which issue from the American press, and which have a circulation of 32,000,000 copies, and which in spite of the immoral tendency of a few, constitute one of the mightiest educational forces of the century. The growth of the library and the newspaper in this country is simply phenomenal. There are few homes which have not their little shelf of books, and fewer still which are not reached by the ubiquitous newspaper. In seeking to supply the demand of an increasingly intelligent people, they have increased the intelligence which has called them into being.

But I must hasten to allude to the progress of religion among us. Has the faith of the people kept pace with its accumulating wealth and its intellectual life? Has the race for wealth separated our people from God, and have the religion of Christ and the church of Christ been outgrown or forgotten amid all this mental activity incident to the remarkable progress of the century in science and art, and all useful knowledge? It is sometimes asserted that this is so, and that the church of Christ is to be left behind by the advancing thought and life and civilization which are bearing us onward. It would not be surprising if amid the pressing demands of the material, the spiritual should have been overlooked; if, in the conquest and development of a new world, the old faith should have received a temporary set-back; if, in the influx of the religionists and anti-religionists of other nations, Protestant Christianity should have failed to hold its own. I am glad that I can

speak with absolute certainty on this point, that while the activity and growth of Protestant Christianity among us during the century have not been all that could be desired, yet there is abundant occasion for devout thanksgiving to God; for it is a fact, proven by carefully gathered statistics, that the number of Protestant church members in this country has increased nearly three-times as fast as the population: that while, at the beginning of the century, the average of communicants to the population was as one to fifteen, in 1880 it was as one to five, and that while one hundred years ago there was one ordained minister to every 2,400 people, there is now one to every 700, if they could only be settled and equally distributed and fastened down. There are now 92,000 houses of worship of all denominations, which are capable of accommodating about one-half of our population, and are estimated to be worth in the aggregate upwards of $350,000,000. This vast sum has been raised, not by State endowment or patronage, nor by forced assessment, but by the voluntary contributions of the people, so that there are few villages of any size to-day, in our country, that have not some place of worship; though, in the rapid settlement of the West, we cannot tell how many destitute villages there may be next week. In a word, then, the professing Christians connected with Protestant churches in the United States number over 12,000,000 to-day, showing that Christianity has a wider and a stronger hold upon the heart of America than ever before, and that the kingdom of God is making progress among us more rapidly than the kingdom of worldliness and of material power. It is safe to say that three-fifths of our entire population are under the direct influence of the Christian church — Protestant or Catholic — of whom

four-fifths are Protestants. It should be added that our own honored denomination is second to none in the progress which it has made, and in the enlargement which God has given it. One hundred years ago, which was the birth year of Dr. Judson, our pioneer missionary, we reckoned 70,000 communicants; to-day, so remarkable has been the favor of God, and so abundant have been our successes, that we number not less than 3,000,000 church members.

In this estimate of the century, there would be a sad omission if there was not some allusion to the growth of the benevolent spirit, which is a vital part of our growing Christianity. As the wealth of the nation has been increased, the occasions for its charitable and holy uses have been greatly multiplied, and to some extent recognized. No one will pretend to say that all has been done in this direction that ought to have been done, or that the spirit of generous and intelligent consecration has now become as prevalent and dominant, as it ought to be, in the hearts of the people, even in the hearts of Christian people. But we may well thank God that the appeals, which have been more in number than the days of the century, have been so heartily responded to. It would be utterly impossible to make any estimate of the aggregate benevolence. God alone has kept the record. We only know that the poor have been relieved with an ever open hand; that charitable institutions of every name have been opened; that free hospitals and asylums for every class of unfortunates have been everywhere established; that cities destroyed by fire and by earthquake have been generously rebuilt; that plenty and comfort have been made to follow close upon the heels of famine and pestilence, in addition to the vast amount of money that has been contributed for the erec-

tion of churches, and the endowment of academies and colleges and seminaries of learning, so that our whole history is luminous with the records, and our whole land is filled with the imperishable monuments of that noble, sympathetic, unworldly, unselfish spirit that is born of our holy religion. And moreover, side by side with this beautiful and ever increasing benevolence at home, has been rising steadily and spreading constantly that most unselfish and (shall I not say it) most Christian of all charities, which, in the ages to come, will distinguish the nineteenth century more than all other forms of progress combined. I mean the interest in the work of the world's conquest for Christ. For it was not until this century, whose achievements we are commemorating, was well upon its course, that that old apostolic spirit, long since dead, and then but recently born again in the mother country, crossed the sea like a heavenly emigrant, touched and fired the heart of Christian America, and spread from denomination to denomination. This new spirit, which seems like the revival of primitive piety in the churches, whose first articulate utterance was, this world, with all its vast resources and its increasing population, belongs to Christ, and must be won to Christ—now finds expression in an annual offering of $5,500,000, a sum, indeed, averaging hardly fifty cents for each professing disciple of Christ, but which He has graciously accepted and marvellously blessed, and which will be more and more increased as the Christians of this nation come to recognize the divine purpose in the discovery and development of this country as related to the redemption and progress of the human race.

Now, for all this wonderful growth and prosperity, this success which has attended our enterprise and skilled

industry, this unparalleled progress in all that constitutes national greatness, I think there is generally in the hearts of this people a sense of gratitude to Almighty God. Although the age is much given to materialism, to the glorification of self, to the deification of human skill and intellect and prowess, there is a prevailing disposition to recognize a superhuman Power and Providence in our State and national blessings, in all evidences of prosperity and progress, in the terrible discipline and the glorious victories through which we have passed, in the general and, I may say, unanticipated success which has attended the experiment of popular government on this continent during the first century of its existence. Not unto you, oh, honored and immortal men, who laid the foundations of this great Republic; not unto you, oh, illustrious names, who drafted its matchless Constitution; not unto you, oh, eminent statesmen, who have been its expounders and defenders; not unto you, brave soldiers of a hundred bloody fields, who sacrificed so much to preserve this Union and free it from the curse and menace that was resting upon it; not unto you, industrious millions, ye toilers with brain and hand, who have developed the resources and moulded the life of this great people; not unto any of us, or all of us, American citizens, living or dead; but first and above all to Him, our fathers' God and our God, be praise, who has given wisdom, and courage, and strength, and skill, and care, and favoring providence, and success, and greatness. "Know ye that the Lord, He is God; it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

But, brethren, with our congratulations and rejoicings, let us not be blindly satisfied with the past and the present,

or ignore the inalienable responsibilities of citizenship. In this centennial year, and on this Thanksgiving Day, we stand face to face with national perils, which will not down at our bidding. There are some who hear in the various agitations of the hour the mutterings of a coming tempest. There are some who fear that the experiment of a hundred years may be approaching its end, who doubt whether the ship of State, of which it may still be said, that

> "Humanity, with all its fears,
> With all the hopes of future years,
> Is hanging breathless on thy fate,"

can survive the shock of the mighty waves that seem impending, who tremble lest this fair Republic may soon be dismembered and go to pieces in a stormy sea. Personally I have no serious apprehensions. The lessons of the past are not lost, but are full of encouragement as to the strength of these old timbers and their power of endurance, when riveted and bolted together by the unyielding purpose of the Almighty. The agitations of the present seem small in comparison with the deadly strife out of which the nation has safely come; but they are too serious to be ignored, and may be fraught with much evil, if they do not menace the existence of the Republic. All good citizens, of whatever party, are called upon to be true to the fundamental principles of our government, to be watchful against the encroachments of evil in whatever quarter, and to stand firmly for the rights of man and the authority of law, both human and divine.

Local government should not be permitted to fall into the hands of notoriously wicked men, who defy law and moral sentiment, shelter criminals if they are of their party, and openly prostitute their sacred trusts to selfish

and criminal ends. Every open violation of law should lead to speedy arrest; every arrest should be followed by impartial trial; and every trial, if resulting in conviction, should be followed by penalty. Men should be elected as executors of the laws, who will not be the shelterers of law-breakers. We need less "pigeon hole" and more penitentiary, otherwise social and political life will become more corrupt, and the criminal will go to his crime with unblushing face, and no fear of the consequences. When party leaders are unscrupulous, and wicked men are put in office, the end of good government is defeated. There are good men enough in every city to secure good local government, and save the laws from being a laughing-stock, and the offices from being a part of the party machine, if they would only awake from their indifference, and break away from party slavery, and unite to bring it about.

Methods should be provided to secure, in all the land, in city as well as village, North and South, an honest ballot, free from fraud or bribery or intimidation. On the purity of the ballot-box depends, to some extent, the stability of our free institutions. An electoral bill should be framed, so fair in its provisions and so certain to secure to every rightful voter the privilege of suffrage uninfluenced, that every respectable legislator would be ashamed not to vote for it, and no Governor would dare to veto it. Every man who refuses to vote for a specified period, should be deprived by law of a freeman's highest prerogative, and be branded as a man without a country; and every man who sells his vote, and any man who buys it, should be not only imprisoned, but disfranchised forever. The registration lists should be kept pure of the names of dead men, and of

men worse than dead. Every voter should register his name under oath before each election, and every false registration should be punished as perjury. The crime of betting on elections for sums large or small, which has rapidly increased in this country, should be fearlessly punished and stopped. Any intimidation should be put down at the point of the bayonet, and every citizen protected in his right by the whole power of the government. The conditions of suffrage should be uniform and rigidly enforced, viz.: intelligence, freedom from crime, inherited citizenship or citizenship acquired by years of residence as long for the un-American as for the American. The holiest place in the land, next to the sanctuary and the home, should be the polling-place, where the will of a sovereign people seeks to express itself in harmony with the will of God.

The power of the saloon must be crippled and destroyed, and the untold injury which it works must be circumscribed more and more until it is reduced to the minimum. The saloon has too long had a controlling voice in our politics and dictated our legislation. It brings forth nothing but waste, misery, pauperism, insanity and crime, a wretched brood. It is the foe of the home, of social order and purity, of the church of Christ, of national prosperity, and of civilization. As another has said: "Civilization must destroy the liquor traffic, or be destroyed by it." It is a sad thing when the result of any election is virtually the coronation of rum. Is it not time that all good citizens should band themselves together against this enemy of our common humanity, and fight it through to the glorious end?

Supervisory, not to say restrictive, laws with reference to immigration need to be speedily enacted and enforced.

It has been said: "When the founders of the American Republic stretched out their hands with a hospitable welcome to all the oppressed of earth, it was in a large measure because Rousseau had taught them to believe in the inherent goodness of man. They took it for granted that the oppressed, no matter who they were and whence they came, were deserving characters, who needed only the liberty which the new Republic offered them, to grow to the full stature of civic, moral and intellectual manhood." We have long since, in sorrow, learned their mistake.

We acknowledge that many of our best, noblest, most substantial, most patriotic citizens have been adopted, have sought on these new shores a freedom and an opportunity which they have intelligently prized. But immigration, as it has increased in quantity, has deteriorated in quality, until we are receiving paupers and criminals, the scum and sewage of all lands, in some instances sent to us by organized assistance and authority. Our privileges and our institutions are too sacred and valuable to be entrusted to such hands. The task of reforming, and assimilating, and converting into manhood such material, is too severe a strain upon our nation's life. A consular inspection needs to be inaugurated which shall diminish the amount of immigration and improve its character: otherwise the prophecy of Herbert Spencer, that through the intermingling of different nationalities, "the Americans may reasonably look forward to a time when they will have produced a civilization grander than any the world has known," will have little prospect of fulfilment.

Again, our common schools must be sacredly guarded, and the public funds be forever withheld from sectarian

uses. Around this citadel is to be fought the next great battle in this nation. God grant that it may be a bloodless one! Already our public school system, the palladium of our liberties, is officially condemned by the highest authority in the Church of Rome. Education is to be transferred away from the control of the State to the control of a foreign priesthood, and then the public funds, contrary to all precedent and sacred principle and constitutional law, are to be demanded for the support of these priestly and sectarian schools. Said a Catholic Bishop in St. Patrick's Cathedral, in St. Louis, on November 13th: "We have a right to that money of the State. It belongs to us, and we should have it." He added: "We educate probably 600,000 at an expense of at least $9,000,000, which ought to come from the State to us." It is ours to reply, kindly but firmly: "Not so; you utterly misunderstand the nature and limitations of Free Government. No taxes can be levied and no public funds used for the support of religion, either yours or any other man's. To do so would be to violate the fundamental law of our Constitution, and to annul the compact under which the nation lives." Few Catholic parents have any desire for the change, preferring for their children the better education which is freely provided by the State. They can be whipped into it only by the lash of ecclesiastical authority. We must stand by those who bravely protest, and stand by the principle which involves everything that is dear to us in this land of civil and religious liberty. Says a writer in the *North American Review*, "The sundering of our free school system, the dividing of the public funds, the recognition of sects in the administration of the Government, would be the death-blow of the Republic, would mark the failure of the American experiment."

I hardly need say, in conclusion, that we need to illustrate in ourselves, and cultivate in others, a nobler and broader manhood, which shall be equal to the demands of a larger nation and a new century. The true greatness of a nation consists in the greatness of the manhood which it develops, and the progress of a nation should be marked by the progressive type of character which it produces. The American of to-day stands on a higher plane than the American of a century ago, both of advantage and of influence. He ought to be a nobler, a more fully developed man. Virtue that exists in a worthy ancestry, and is not transmitted and developed, is a national possession of doubtful value. Self-government politically ought to lead to self-government personally, and a people that are sovereigns ought to learn more and more to exercise their sovereignty over themselves. The development of a century of national life, ought to be seen in the development of the life of the people. A wealthier and a stronger country should have a richer and a stronger life. An advancing civilization must carry humanity with it, the only material on which civilization can work. Knowledge grows from more to more: does life, character, manhood grow from more to more? Our fathers contended with great problems and solved them: they grappled with grave perils and throttled them. There were giants in those days. Are there greater giants in these days? What has the century done for American manhood? How many layers has it put around its heart of oak? How many feet has it added to its altitude? Does the new century find the wisdom, the strength, the manhood that it needs? Is it not possible that this age is a more compromising and self-indulgent age than the age in which the fathers lived;

that there is less iron in its blood, less muscle in its principle, less clearness in its moral vision, less erectness and manliness in its attitude and pose; that it may have been enervated and weakened by the luxury which the century has brought to it? Is it not possible that our great need to-day is a higher type of American manhood, a sterner self-control, a mightier resistance of the corrupt passions and blinding ambitions of human nature, which have such sweep and sway, a higher regard for law, truth, principle, and personal obligation, a nobler spirit of self-denial for the public good, and a deeper reverence for all things holy and divine? Heeren, the Greek historian, says that "Greece fell when things sacred ceased to be sacred." Religion, with its self-restraints and its holy incentives, is the basis of morality, and character, and true manood.

I am aware that instruction in this department belongs not to the State, but to the church. To our churches, then, made fully alive to the responsibility which rests upon them, the nation looks, expecting them to give stability and nobility to the new civilization, to arouse the American of to-day to nobler heroisms, and to transmute the moral lessons of the past and the gratitude of the present into a truer, purer and larger life. "God accounts those mercies forgotten," it is said, "which are not written with legible characters in our lives." Not in joyful hymn, nor in eloquent oration, nor in written history, nor in monuments of stone with inscriptions of brass, does a nation's gratitude find fittest expression, but in the love of truth, in the doing of righteousness and charity, in a better faith in God and service for humanity. In Old Testament history, when God had given to Joshua a signal victory over the city and inhabitants of Ai, an altar was

erected in commemoration of the great event. Then God commanded to be inscribed upon this altar, not an account of the victory, which we should have judged appropriate, but a copy of the law of Moses, "whereby He plainly showed that the best way of remembering the mercy was not to forget the law." As God's law, which is man's righteous rule of life, and God's name, which is the expression of his holy character and love, are widely reverenced and increasingly loved among the American people, we may believe that the blessings of the past century will be continued and multiplied unto us and unto our children.

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